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BOOK REVIEWS.

HAND-COMMENTAR ZUM NEUEN TESTAMENT. IV. EVANGELIUM, BRIEFE UND OFFENBARUNG DES JOHANNES. Bearbeitet von *H. J. Holtzmann*. Zweite verbesserte und vermehrte Auflage. (Freiburg I. B. and Leipsic : 1893. J. C. B. Mohr.)

The fourth gospel, of all the sacred writings of the New Testament, has always been the reviewer's favorite book. Its profundity, its wealth of philosophical ideas, the fervor of its author's religious sentiment, and the spiritual grace that pervades the whole book, exercised an unspeakable charm on my mind. This gospel was the first to rouse my doubts in the belief of literal inspiration, and it was again the one, which, after the severest storms of infidelity had blown over, reconciled me to the spirit of Christianity. Thus the perusal of Professor Holtzmann's commentary again arouses the recollections of former struggles, and I find that even to-day the first chapter of the fourth gospel has lost none of its fascination. It is a wonderful book, and its author is a man whom I always longed to meet and shake hands with, over a span of almost two millenniums and a world-wide abyss of difference of opinion.

Only those who are familiar with the difficulties of the St. John literature of the New Testament can really appreciate this latest work of Prof. H. J. Holtzmann. He presents in a most clear and concise manner the problems involved, together with their various solutions, critically arranged. He carefully avoids obtruding on the reader his own views. He stands before us as a faithful compiler only. I say "only," but this "only" means a great deal. It does not mean that he suppresses or conceals his own views, it means that he states the facts with scrupulous impartiality. If there is any partiality apparent in his treatment of the sacred writings, it is the reverent attitude he preserves whenever love of truth obliges him to accept the negative result of critical investigations. And where is there a theological scholar to-day, who is orthodox enough to dare to accept the theory that the gospel of St. John was written by the apostle? Holtzmann carries his impartiality to the extent of not rejecting this old traditional idea, concerning the authorship of the fourth gospel, but the evidence against it is overwhelmingly sufficient to satisfy the most narrowminded believer. Holtzmann teaches us at the same time to under-

stand the spirit of the first and second century of our era, and thus excludes from the beginning the old prejudice, that if the author were not the man whom he impersonated his work must be regarded as a fraud. The historical value of the book lies in the revelations it gives us concerning the religious demands of the times in which it was written. The fourth gospel originated when the Jewish religiosity of growing Christianity began to expand into cosmic universality. The author was undoubtedly a Jew-Christian, whose home most likely was Ephesus. Ephesus was the place where we find the first beginnings of Christian Alexandrianism. Here the Logos-idea was introduced into Christian thought. Philo, the Alexandrian Jew, had already represented Moses as the incarnation of the divine Logos. Should not now a Christian familiar with Philo's philosophy apply the same method to Jesus of Nazareth? Some work adapted to satisfy the wants of the time and especially the religious yearnings for knowledge as a means of edification was needed. The Christ-idea had taken a definite shape in the imagination of the Christian congregations of Asia Minor, consisting of diaspora Jews and Gentiles, and their Christ-idea found a worthy expression in the picture of Jesus of Nazareth as we have it in the fourth gospel.

The fact that the author of the fourth gospel was a Jew-Christian, appears from his readiness to explain Jewish customs. He knows Judaism, and is familiar with Jerusalem as it appeared after the destruction of the temple. The probability is that he wrote his gospel between 120 and 140. He is comparable to Matthew in so far as both are greatly interested in the controversy between Gentiles *versus* Jews, yet Matthew's Israel has grown into the world-wide cosmos. The frequent occurrence of the very word "cosmos" in the fourth gospel is remarkable. In the same way the Greek term *γινώσκειν* (to know) appears besides the older term *πιστεύειν* (to believe), which latter is a translation of a Jewish conception, still employed so vigorously by St. Paul. The author of the fourth gospel is not familiar with Galilee and does not seem to care for consistency in the details of his accounts, for he frequently contradicts his own statements. The most important differences between his and the three synoptic gospels are the accounts as to the main field of Jesus's activity, which according to St. John was Judea, according to the synoptic gospels Galilee, and the day of Jesus's death, which according to St. John is the 14th of Nisan, according to the synoptic gospels the 15th of Nisan, so that if we follow the latter, Jesus would have been tried and condemned, against all Jewish customs, on one of the greatest festival days. Holtzmann rightly warns the reader, that whatever may speak in favor of the synoptic gospels as being, in general, historically more correct, the author of the fourth gospel might have had some special source for this particular fact.—

The Revelation of St. John has given more trouble to the Christian exegesis than any other book, and light was not shed upon its plan and construction, until it was found to be one instance only of a whole class of literary productions. When we consider the Revelation of St. John in the same line with other apocalyptic

works, and when we understand the mental disposition of the pious Jews shortly before and after Christ, we have a clew to the enigmatic visions which are unrolled before our eyes.

The expectations of the Jews in the times of the Maccabees were disappointed again and again. The great events of the world did not justify the national hopes, and God did not seem to care about fulfilling his promises. The last prophet, who called himself Malachi, or "the messenger of God," proclaimed the message of the Lord, "Yet I loved Jacob," and he comforts the faithful who still endure in all their tribulations, that "a book of remembrance is written before him for them "that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name." After Malachi, a number of revelations appeared, which, to the satisfaction of the Messianic expectations, explained the events of the world, and prophesied that those only who should persevere until the end would be called upon to rule, together with the "Son of Man," who is to come to smite the heathens and to rule them with an iron rod. The first apocalyptic author, who wrote in 164 B. C., impersonated Daniel, the prophet, who had lived about 400 B. C. The powerful nations of the world are represented as beasts, the fourth and last beast being the Macedonian empire. It has ten horns, that is, rulers, the last one being Antiochus Epiphanes. As soon as his power is broken, the power over the earth will be given to Israel, which is called the Son of Man. The power of the tenth horn was broken, indeed, yet the Messianic hopes remained unfulfilled, and thus new prophecies were wanted, which should again explain the plans of the Almighty, so that the faithful would still endure and hope. Thus, Henech was written, and after Henech the Assumption of Moses, the book of Baruch, and other revelations.

The apocalyptic literature is characterised by Messianic expectations and eschatological reflections. The end of the present course of affairs is said to be near at hand and a new order will be established in which the faithful shall rule for a whole millennium and the wicked be tormented.

The Revelation of St. John represents this spirit of apocalyptic hopes among the early Christians of Asia Minor. It throws much light upon the conditions and the conceptions of a period concerning which we have very little information. We here see Christianity in its beginnings. The coloring of the Revelation is still Jewish. Its author stands in a conscious contrast to the Greek spirit which is about to change the properly Jewish character of the new doctrine. The author of the St. John revelation is a Jew to the backbone still; he denounces the antinomistic Christianity of the Gentiles as represented by Nicolaitanes whom, we are told, God hateth. He does not directly mention the apostle St. Paul, but there is little doubt that he is alluded to in Chap. II, 2, as one of them "which say they are apostles and are not."

The more powerful the Greek spirit grew in the church, the weaker became these original features inherited from the diaspora Jews until they were dropped forever through the efforts of Origenes who made a decided and successful opposition to the belief in the millennium. Yet it took some time for the traditional view of

the Messiah to change into the purer and more spiritual Christ-idea. There were two parties in the early church who spoke two radically different idioms; the one still cherished the old chiliasm, dreaming of the establishment of a millennium on earth. Their terminology moved always in the same allegories: they spoke of green and fat fields and of sulphurous abysses, of white horses and terrible beasts, of trees of life, of golden cities and of war and bloodshed, while the other party spoke of Logos, of the eternal Son through whom the world had been made, of "the dispensation of the fulness of the times in which God might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth," of the *pleroma* and of aeons.

The Revelation of St. John is an expression of the former party and it was natural that after a complete victory of the latter party, Christian teachers knew not what to make of this book which shows Christian views by the side of an irreconcilable Judaism, and a worldly empire in Jerusalem, the beloved city with twenty-four Jewish elders representing the twelve tribes of Israel. The rest of Jerusalem is to be finally converted while there is no hope for paganism. The difference between Israelites and Gentiles remains a radical one even in the Holy City when the new heaven and the new earth has been created. The Gentile-Christians appear as citizens of a lower order. The Israelites alone live in the city while the Gentiles only walk in the light thereof, and they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.

We have given a few glimpses of the problems of the St. John literature only. It is impossible to go over the whole field. Nor is it necessary to do so. Professor Holtzmann has given us so complete a presentation that we need but refer to his work which is indispensable to all interested in the literature of the New Testament. It will be the more valuable and welcome as it is furnished with an index, a feature rarely found in German books.

P. C.

DIE WILLENSFREIHEIT UND IHRE GEGNER. By *Dr. Constantin Gutberlet*. Fulda: Fuldaer Actiendruckerei. 1893.

Dr. Constantin Gutberlet regards the doctrine of freewill as a cardinal doctrine of Christianity. In the present booklet he endeavors to show that all attacks made upon it by unchristian savants have failed. He criticises Höffding, Lombroso, Wundt, Münsterberg, Lotze, P. Ree, and Schopenhauer, and establishes as his own view a theory of freewill which he calls "freedom of choice." He says: "There is no decision without *sufficient* reason, but there may be without *rational* reason. The sufficient reason is that a greater good may be recognised as possessing 'blind' sides, that we can do without it and even reject it for the sake of these 'blind' sides. On the other hand, a lesser good may be given as an object of willing, and our willing by its own energy conditions the free decision of the will" (p. 25). Freedom of will is not a reversal of causation, which latter, according to Gutberlet, is "an absolutely necessary law" (p. 8 and *passim*).